

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR CE TH

SUBJ: MRS. BANDARANAIKE'S VISIT TO THAILAND

SUMMARY: AGREEMENT TO EXPAND TRADE, MILD REAFFIRMATION OF SUPPORT FOR INDIAN OCEAN ZONE OF PEACE DECLARATION, AND CEREMONIAL CALLS HIGHLIGHTED PRIME MINISTER BANDARANAIKE'S FOUR DAY STATE VISIT TO THAILAND. END SUMMARY.

1. THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE EMANATING FROM PRIME MINISTER BANDARANAIKE'S FOUR DAY VISIT TO THAILAND EXPRESSES MUTUAL RELIEF AT THE CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES IN INDOCHINA , MILDLY REAFFIRMS JOINT SUPPORT FOR THE INDIAN OCEAN ZONE OF PEACE, AND DEALS EXTENSIVELY WITH BILATERAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION. THE COMMUNIQUE ALSO REPORTS THAT THE TWO PMS EXCHANGED VIEWS ON ASEAN AND THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT AND THE ASEAN AND NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT CONFERENCES COMING UP IN FEBRUARY AND AUGUST, 1976, RESPECTIVELY. MRS. BANDARANAIKE INVITED PRIME MINISTER KHUKRIT TO VISIT SRI LANKA, AND KHUKRIT ACCEPTED. NO DATE WAS GIVEN. (WE ARE POUCHING COPIES OF THE COMMUNIQUE TEXT TO COLOMBO EA, AND NEA/INS.)

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2. MRS. BANDARANAIKE'S VISIT INCLUDED CONSIDERABLE CEREMONIAL FUNCTIONS AND LIMITED SUBSTANTIVE TALKS. DURING HER VISIT SHE LAID A WREATH AT THE VICTORY MONUMENT, VISITED THE ANCIENT CAPITAL OF AYUTTHAYA (WHICH THE BURMESE SACKED IN 1767), CALLED ON THE (THERAVADA BUDDHIST) SUPREME PATRIARCH, AND HAD AN AUDIENCE WITH THE KING AND QUEEN IN CHIAN MAI.

3. THE KEY SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES WERE THE IOZP AND BILATERAL TRADE. IN BOTH INSTANCES, THE CONVERSATIONS APPEAR NOT TO HAVE BROKEN NEW GROUND, BUT TO HAVE REAFFIRMED PREVIOUS SUBSTANTIAL AGREEMENT. IN TRADE, THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE EXPRESSES "THE DESIRE TO INCREASE BILATERAL TRADE.. IN PARTICULAR .. TEA, RICE, SUGAR AND COCONUT."

4. PRESS PLAY ON THE VISIT FOCUSED ON MRS. BANDARANAIKE'S ARRIVAL, PHOTOS OF HER CEREMONIAL ROUNDS, AND REMINTS OF THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE. EDITORIAL COMMENT WAS LIMITED AND BLANDLY POSITIVE.

5. COMMENT: MRS. BANDARANAIKE'S VISIT CAME AT A TIME WHEN THAILAND'S MAIN CONCERNS ARE WITH DOMESTIC ELECTION POLITICS, AND TO A LESSER EXTENT, THE ASEAN SUMMIT MEETING. THE VISIT NONETHELESS SERVED TO WARM THE CONGENIAL BUT STILL LOW KEY RELATIONS THAT EXIST.
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